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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000662

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SUBJECT: COLLABORATION AND CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MOI AND
MOD FORCES

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES DAVID SATTERFIELD, REASONS 1.4 (C) AND
(D).

11. (C/REL MNFI) SUMMARY: Recent high-profile encounters between the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Defense (MoD) highlight the friction that exists between the two security ministries. Although there also has been cooperation in some areas, there have been several incidents in which their respective forces have targeted each other. MNF-I has stepped in to help work out these differences and form better collaborative relationships. END SUMMARY.

MOD/MOI CONFRONTATION

12. (C/REL MNFI) Several high profile encounters -- some confrontational, some collaborative -- between Iraqi Army (IA, part of the MoD) and Iraqi Police (IP, part of the MoI) forces have occurred over the past few weeks. The latest incident occurred the night of February 26 when the MoI's Fourth Public Order Division (POD) launched a raid against elements of the IA's 16th Strategic Infrastructure Battalion (SIB) near the Daura Oil Refinery in Baghdad. The MoI claims to have had credible information that 16th SIB has members actively involved in insurgent activity, including VBIED production, IED production and training, foreign fighter housing and training, IED emplacement within the Daura facility, and mortar attacks. (COMMENT: This SIB has not yet been vetted or prepared for IA training and is one of the original tribal forces hired by the Ministry of Oil. It is credible that individuals in 16th SIB may have been responsible for attacks and have insurgent connections. The 6th IA Division has assumed operational control over this unit now. END COMMENT.) The POD forces raided several houses and detained 31 individuals, some of whom were SIB soldiers. The POD had obtained pre-raid approval from MND-Baghdad but failed to mention that the targets were connected to a SIB. Moreover, MoI did not inform MoD about the impending raid or the information it had acquired about the SIB. Complicating the matter, Iraqi TV reporting the incident characterized the SIB suspects as criminals who work for MoD. On February 28, Minister of Defense Duleime ended the weekly MoD/MoI/MNF-I meeting early, challenging the MoI representative over this incident and storming out. (NOTE: Minister of Interior Jabr was not present at this meeting. END NOTE.)

A NEW MOI/MOD AGREEMENT ON COOPERATION

13. (C/REL MNFI) The evening of February 28, MNF-I CG Casey

met with Ministers Duleime and Jabr over dinner to work out an agreement to improve coordination and operations between the two ministries. MoD completed and MoI has concurred on what MNSTC-I considers a good agreement. The essence of the accord is that, whenever possible, the MoI and MoD will inform each other in advance (or immediately afterward in the case of sudden developments) regarding planned operations against personnel in each other's ministry or forces. In addition, the ministries will agree to conduct joint operations when one ministry needs to conduct an activity in the other ministry's geographic sector, especially in Baghdad. Casey highlighted the need to rebuild trust between the ministries and that just having a written agreement is insufficient.

14. (C/REL MNFI) MNF-I will organize joint investigations of the February 26 incident and perhaps one other incident, which involves allegations that MoI commandos targeted BG Najh Hashim, a Sunni brigadier on the MoD staff. Hashim reportedly claimed that MoI commandos had raided his apartment and assaulted him. MNF-I will ask the two ministries to assign personnel to the investigations.

RECENT EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE MOI/MOD COOPERATION

15. (C/REL MNFI) Two significant IA/IP encounters occurred during the past several weeks that demonstrated effective MoI/MoD collaboration. The first incident involved IA personnel manning a checkpoint in northeast Baghdad who detained 22 members of the MoI Highway Patrol on January 20. Four of the highway patrolmen allegedly informed the

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soldiers at the checkpoint that they were escorting a Sunni Arab to a Shi'a mosque where he was to be interrogated and (in an incredibly frank admission on the part of the policemen) killed. The soldiers detained all of the patrolmen (and the Sunni Arab victim), eventually releasing the victim and remanding the four patrolmen to Abu Ghraib. The remaining 18 patrolmen are in the custody of the MoI's Major Crimes Unit for further questioning.

16. (C/REL MNFI) In the second incident, on February 20, a unit of the IA 6th division (6-IA), on a routine presence patrol, confronted a suspicious IP patrol. When approached by the soldiers, several policemen dropped their weapons and tried to flee but the IA detained all 18 IP officers. Upon initial questioning by 6-IA, the detained IPs revealed that they were from al-Kut and claimed to be on a legitimate out-of-sector patrol. Contacted by phone, MoI could not verify the IP's claim and recommended that the IA confiscate their vehicles (3 Nissan trucks) and weapons (18 AK-47s plus ammo and side arms) and detain the IPs for further tactical questioning. Both MoI and 6-IA suspected that the IPs matched the profile of an IP-disguised "death squad" that operates throughout the 6-IA's area of responsibility (i.e., greater Baghdad). In addition to murders, the death squad is accused of kidnappings, which it allegedly uses to finance further criminal and insurgent activity. The 18 policemen reportedly implicated their former chief in al-Kut, BG Hanin, who recently was Chief of Police in Baghdad's Karkh district. MoI also arrested Hanin within the past few days.

17. (C/REL MNFI) COMMENT: Squabbles between the IP and IA are not new, especially when IP and IA run into each other's sectors in Baghdad. According to MNSTC-I's assessment, company-grade (captain and below) officers from the two services generally work well together; friction tends to arise at the field-grade (colonel and above) level. However, effective army/police collaboration across the board is vital, especially when loyalties of police units are suspect. The cross-sectarian credibility of the IP must be reestablished in the eyes of all Iraqis, and improved inter-service collaboration between the MoD and MoI is likely

to bring additional transparency and accountability to the system. The January 20 and February 20 incidents are good examples of how such coordination can bring "bad cops" and "bad soldiers" to justice. END COMMENT.
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